

**PENNS VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
January 15, 2018**

PRESENT:

Penns Valley Regional Planning Commission

Centre Hall	Chris Cooper and Bill Guisewhite
Gregg Township	Doug Bierly
Haines Township	Daryl Schafer and Charlie Valentine
Miles Township	Ron Hough
Millheim Borough	
Penn Township	Bob Fox
Potter Township	Ron Grove and Jake Tanis

Other:

Centre County Planning and Community Development Office	Linda Marshall
--	----------------

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Grove called the January 15, 2018 meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

REORGANIZATION

Mr. Grove opened the Reorganization meeting of the Penns Valley Regional Planning Commission by requesting nominations for Chair. Mr. Bierly nominated Mr. Valentine to serve as Chair. Mr. Tanis seconded the motion. Mr. Valentine nominated Mr. Fox to serve as Chair. Mr. Hough seconded the motion. After discussing the nominations, Mr. Valentine agreed to serve as Chair, and Mr. Fox agreed to serve as Vice Chair. The nominations were approved.

Mr. Grove called for nominations for Treasurer. Mr. Bierly nominated Ms. Cooper. Mr. Hough seconded the nomination. The nomination was approved.

Ms. Marshall agreed to serve as Secretary.

Mr. Valentine took as Chair at 7:10 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

APPROVAL of MEETING NOTES

Mr. Valentine called for additions or corrections to the November 20, 2017 meeting notes of the Penns Valley Regional Planning Commission. Mr. Schafer moved to approve the November 20, 2017 meeting notes, as written. Mr. Fox seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Treasurer Report

Ms. Cooper read the Treasurer's Report, reporting that there is a balance of \$247.73 in the account. Ms. Marshall noted that the invoice for the 2018 Meeting Schedule legal advertisement has not been received.

Secretary Report

Ms. Marshall reported that Burkholder's Country Market is considering a solar energy project, which entails the installation of solar carports in the surface parking lot. The project consultant is submitting a grant application to the Department of Community and Economic Development for funding.

Ms. Marshall explained that the scope of work was reviewed to determine if the project was consistent with the Penns Valley Regional Comprehensive Plan. The Centre County Planning and Community Development Office sent a consistency review letter to the project consultant. The letter and project information were circulated at the meeting. Ms. Marshall stated that she will scan the information and send it to the representatives via email.

REPORTS:

Centre Hall Borough

The representatives had no report. They asked as to what is included in the municipal reports. The members replied that the reports consist of current municipal activities/work items. Mr. Valentine asked for any updates on the proposed natural gas line. No update was available.

Gregg

Mr. Bierly reported that Ms. Keri Miller, Supervisor, was sworn in and did attend the Township's Re-organization meeting.

Haines Township

Mr. Schafer reported that the Township appointed its first members to the Zoning Hearing Board. He added that the Board members are being trained this week.

Mr. Valentine reported that a new cell tower was erected near the quarry, which has improved the service. He added that the Verizon tower is disguised as a tree. Mr. Valentine also noted that he was not able to receive cell service at first, but he learned that his phone needed to be upgraded to 4G. He commented that 3G phones are not compatible with the tower's service.

Miles Township

No report.

Millheim Borough

No representative was present. Ms. Snyder was present before the meeting was called to order to pick up any handouts.

Penn Township

Mr. Fox reported that the Township's contractor, Harter Utility, is working on the water line and that they drilled under Penns Creek three times before having success. The contractor is installing a 4-inch, poly tube water line in Hartertown.

Potter Township

Mr. Grove reported that the Potters Mills sewage system project will begin this summer. He added that the traffic on Seven Mountains will be held up when the contractor starts blasting. It is anticipated that traffic may be stopped for up to 30 minutes.

OLD BUSINESS

-Tri-Municipal Park and Recreation Committee

No representative from the Committee was present. Ms. Marshall reported that the Committee received a \$190,000 grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. The grant will be used for the development of the park, and the work will include construction of parking areas, access drive, pedestrian walkway, multi-purpose fields, nature play area and volleyball courts; installation of rain garden and bioswales; ADA access, landscaping, project sign and other related site improvements.

-Update on the Discussion Regarding Internet Service in the Region

Mr. Schafer reported that he did not have any update. He commented that the information provided by GME did not seem to be a viable solution to pursue. Ms. Marshall noted that Millheim Borough was being asked to give consideration to agreeing to be a pilot project for the mobile access system. No other updates were provided.

Mr. Fox reported that Penn Township has not received any updates on the tower proposed for Paradise Road. He indicated that that tower was to be erected by Mobilite Corporation in August 2017; however, the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission ruled in July that a DAS, Distributed Antennae Systems, is a public utility.

-Penns Valley EMS

This discussion occurred under the Potter Township report.

Mr. Tanis informed the Commission that he visited the Fame EMS recently. He stated that the service receives public funds from six or more local jurisdictions, and the source of the funds varies from earned income tax to property tax to nuisance tax. Mr. Tanis added that the service also provides transport, which helps them financially.

Mr. Tanis stated that the Fame EMS attributed the problem that ambulance services are having to Obamacare.

Mr. Tanis stated that he had invited Messrs. Henry Beiler and Luke Peachey to the January meeting of the municipal representatives.

Mr. Tanis noted that the next meeting is scheduled for February 20th and will be held at Potter Township.

Penns Valley Regional Planning Commission
Meeting Notes
January 15, 2018
Page 4

Mr. Tanis informed the Commission that Mr. Henry Beiler's daughter sold donuts in their store, donating \$285 to the EMS.

Mr. Valentine asked what each of the municipalities is doing to address the issue.

Mr. Tanis replied that Potter Township voted in October 2017 to give 0.5 mills to the Penns Valley EMS as long as the other municipalities agreed to do so.

Mr. Fox reported that Penn Township will donate an equivalent of 0.5 mills in 2018.

Mr. Fox remarked that there was no education on the problem until recently. He added that if the municipalities are contributing taxpayers' money that there needs to be local elected officials on the EMS Board.

Mr. Schafer commented that Haines Township receives the EMS meeting notes; however, the notes do not provide enough in the way of details.

Ms. Cooper asked if there have ever been any audits that would show the EMS' expenses. Mr. Tanis replied that Johnson Brothers conducts the audit.

A brief discussion occurred on enacting the tax since it will be paid by property owners and not by anyone who rents.

It was reported that the Penns Valley EMS will run an ad in the Grapevine, providing an explanation of EMS' situation.

Mr. Fox pointed out that Mr. Jason Brooks is not a paid employee of the EMS and that he puts in a lot of time and effort into the organization.

Mr. Valentine asked as to who will make sure that municipal funds will be spent wisely.

Ms. Schafer replied that the service needs an Executive Committee as well as a Fundraising Committee.

It was noted that there will also be bylaws put in place and that the bylaws used for the local fire committees could be used as examples.

It was reported that the Penns Valley EMS recently received a grant to purchase a generator to be used, if needed, for establishing a warming shelter.

Mr. Tanis reminded the representatives of the February 20th meeting to discuss the EMS. He offered to ask the Potter Township to send out a reminder. Mr. Tanis will chair the meeting.

Per the municipal codes, the millage limit for an emergency services tax is 0.5 mills. Any funding gaps would need to be addressed through subscriptions and/or fundraising.

Mr. Fox stated that the municipalities could raise one mill and not label it an emergency services tax.

It was noted that a solution needs to be put in place before April 2019.

Mr. Hough stated that he learned that the Union County EMS personnel are paid by the hospital. He remarked that he had suggested a similar arrangement for the Penns Valley EMS, but he was told that the service does not have a high enough call volume. Mr. Hough noted that the employees are the service's biggest expense.

Mr. Guisewhite stated that he heard a news report that there was legislation introduced in Harrisburg that would require insurance reimbursements to be sent directly to the EMS provider instead of the insured.

Ms. Cooper asked if any of the local officials are involved with this concern.

Mr. Valentine asked about the upcoming Centre County Township Officials Association meeting and if it would make sense to have this issue addressed at the spring meeting. Mr. Schafer replied that the Association did pass a resolution supporting an increase in the millage for emergency services tax and that the resolution was forwarded to the state Association. He commented that the resolution does not address reimbursements.

Mr. Hough commented that not all of the EMS services are in trouble. Mr. Schafer followed up by stating that LifeLink is one example where they have a high enough call volume level. Some services are able to obtain revenues from non-emergency transports.

The Commission decided that they wanted to invite the state and federal legislators to their March 19th meeting to discuss the Penns Valley EMS and issues related to the solvency of the service.

Mr. Hough moved to have a letter of invitation drafted to be sent to U.S. Representative Glenn Thompson, PA Senator Jake Corman and PA Representatives Kerry Benninghoff and Mike Hanna. Mr. Bierly seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Ms. Marshall will draft the letter and send it to the Commission members for review and comment.

Mr. Hough informed the Commission that he received a letter from the Mifflinburg EMS, offering to provide mutual aide, if needed.

-Regional Comprehensive Plan Implementation-Updating the Demographics Chapter

Ms. Marshall distributed a chart showing the number of housing units for each municipality and CDP (Census Designated Place) in the region as well as the number of units per square mile. She explained the difference in the numbers between the boroughs and townships with the boroughs showing a higher concentration of units.

She asked the Commission if they had any preferences on mapping the data. No preferences were shared.

Ms. Marshall stated that she will finalize the draft chapter and send it to the Commission members for review and comment.

NEW BUSINESS

No new business was considered by the Commission.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Ms. Marshall provided the Commission with a calendar listing the 2018 meeting dates. She also distributed an information sheet from Centre County on the 2018 County Liquid Fuels Program, which includes the funding allocations. Gregg and Potter Townships and Millheim Borough will receive funding.

FOR GOOD OF THE ORDER

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Mr. Tanis moved to adjourn the January 15, 2018 meeting of the Penns Valley Regional Planning Commission at 8:37 p.m. Mr. Schafer seconded the motion. The motion carried.